

Wisconsin Energy Corporation

9400-YO-100

Transcript of Proceedings

Volume 3

Public Session

February 26, 2015

ORIGINAL

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BEFORE THE

PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION OF WISCONSIN

APPLICATION OF WISCONSIN ENERGY)	
CORPORATION FOR APPROVAL TO)	Docket No.
ACQUIRE THE OUTSTANDING COMMON)	
STOCK OF INTEGRYS ENERGY GROUP,)	9400-YO-100
INC.)	

EXAMINER MICHAEL NEWMARK, PRESIDING

TRANSCRIPT OF PROCEEDINGS

PUBLIC SESSION

VOLUME 3

ORIGINAL

Reported By:

LYNN M. BAYER, RPR, RMR,
Gramann Reporting, Ltd.
(414) 272-7878

HEARING HELD:

February 26, 2015

Bay Beach Wildlife Sanctuary

Green Bay, Wisconsin

3:00 p.m.

TRANSCRIPT PAGES:

1 - 15, Incl.

EXHIBITS:

(None.)

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A P P E A R A N C E S

OF THE COMMISSION STAFF

Jason Chasco

Lois Hubert

Amy Pepin

(FOR INDEX SEE BACK OF TRANSCRIPT.)

1 TRANSCRIPT OF PROCEEDINGS 3:00 p.m.

2 (Discussion off the record.)

3 EXAMINER NEWMARK: We can get started
4 here. I do have two people. The first person I
5 have is Alexander, looks like Tetzlaff. Did I get
6 it right? That doesn't happen often.

7 ALEXANDER TETZLAFF, PUBLIC WITNESS, DULY SWORN

8 DIRECT TESTIMONIAL STATEMENT

9 BY MR. TETZLAFF: My name is Alexander
10 Tetzlaff. I'm speaking today about a number of
11 considerations that I feel important to the
12 Commission to consider when approving the
13 acquisition. I was a line electrician for Wisconsin
14 Public Service for 13 years. I now work for IUOE
15 Local 420 as a business agent. And we represent
16 both WPS and the power plant workers at We Energies.
17 But I'm not here today on the part of the union.

18 My former co-workers or my co-workers and
19 my fellow union members work as line electricians,
20 power plant workers, gas guys, work with dangerous
21 commodities, and safety is a big deal. Our union
22 provides safety and training programs for our
23 employers. The members are proud to work for two of
24 the best companies in the state. They are good
25 companies as they go through.

1 We enjoy positive and productive
2 relationships with We Energies and WPS. As utility
3 workers, we take our responsibility to serve the
4 customers and the ratepayers very seriously and
5 believe in productivity and commitment to the
6 excellence that is second to none.

7 The Commission must ensure that WEC
8 carries out the proposed acquisition in a way to
9 deliver safe and reliable, affordable energy to
10 ratepayers. The key to ensuring that We Energies
11 and WPS continue to provide excellent service to
12 customers for years is by maintaining a strong
13 skilled workforce. Okay. Reductions in staffing,
14 whether by attrition or layoffs, is negatively going
15 to affect that. Effective work planning will ensure
16 that utilities maintain adequate levels of staffing
17 and deliver safe and reliable services. Effective
18 and inclusive succession planning will ensure that
19 knowledge and skills and work ethic experienced
20 workers are passed down to the next generation of
21 utility workers. We have an aging workforce right
22 now.

23 Utilities and their employees and labor
24 organizations share a common goal in developing and
25 maintaining a highly productive, safety conscious

1 and diverse workforce. I believe workforce planning
2 and succession planning are the most effective when
3 utilities and their workers and labor unions work
4 together on training, recruitment and workforce
5 safety and other initiatives.

6 As it makes its decision in the case, the
7 Commission should ensure that the utilities engage
8 in comprehensive workforce planning and collaborate
9 with the unions and their employees in carrying out
10 the proposed acquisition. Thank you.

11 EXAMINER NEWMARK: All right. Great.
12 Thanks.

13 (Witness excused.)

14 EXAMINER NEWMARK: Steven Evan Gillis.
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1 STEVEN E. GILLIS, PUBLIC WITNESS, DULY SWORN

2 DIRECT TESTIMONIAL STATEMENT

3 BY MR. GILLIS: My name is Steven Evan
4 Gillis. I'm here both as a shareholder and as a
5 resident of northeast Wisconsin. And my concern
6 about this merger is whether that's going to make
7 the administration of the combined utility, whether
8 that's going to be more remote than the current
9 administration we have. And my sincere hope is that
10 it's not. And by remote, I mean not really
11 cognizant of what's going on in the service area.

12 This service area happens to be, by
13 anyone's stretch of the imagination and
14 statistically as demonstrated, as a very dairy
15 industry rich area. And that's a great blessing for
16 this area because it's relatively recession proof,
17 lots of employment. It also means there's lots and
18 lots and lots of manure.

19 I've spent some time looking at this; and
20 I don't think it's arguable that manure digestion to
21 yield electricity is a demonstrably mature
22 scientific fact. It works. And it yields
23 byproducts that are also much more environmentally
24 friendly than the manure being spread as it has been
25 traditionally.

1 Given all of that, there has been to date
2 no proactive effort by the current owner of this
3 utility to in any way facilitate, much less invest
4 in or foster, manure biogas technology. We have a
5 tremendous resource here that is instead being piled
6 on top of itself all over the land that we all live
7 in; and, by the way, it's going into all of the
8 water that we all try to enjoy recreationally and
9 otherwise.

10 And so we have a situation here where the
11 current regime has decided that because there is a
12 problem with the Pulliam Plant in terms of meeting
13 the requirements, they've made application for
14 another natural gas turbine. They've made no effort
15 whatsoever to take a look at the biogas opportunity
16 that we have here. And comparing the two for a
17 moment, natural gas is brought to you by the same
18 people who bring gasoline to us. Whereas, of
19 course, biogas is naturally locally available.

20 But, secondly, if you look at them from
21 two standpoints, one is pricing, nobody can predict
22 future pricing of anything very accurately. But one
23 thing history tells us about folks who bring us
24 natural gas is that natural gas prices may be low
25 now, but they're going to ride the same roller

1 coaster that gasoline has ridden and, frankly, that
2 natural gas has ridden historically as well. Not so
3 with manure. Manure is here, it's returned to the
4 farmer with greater value than it comes in
5 post-digestion, in other words, it's returned with
6 better value. So we're not looking at any sort of
7 cost of the inputs here to create the gas being as
8 volatile.

9 I think, secondly, when you look at the
10 byproducts, natural gas will replace that coal
11 generation. But so will biogas. But in addition,
12 biogas will yield other byproducts that are used
13 either by the farmer or can be used otherwise in the
14 community that are valuable fertilizer products.

15 So in summary, I said "undecided" on my
16 sheet because I really am. I don't know how much
17 more remote the management could get if it's moved
18 from Chicago to Milwaukee, whether that's going to
19 make a difference. But my sincere hope is that it
20 does. Because, again, the continuing growth of the
21 valuable dairy industry that we have here, you know,
22 is in jeopardy until or unless we can resolve this
23 manure issue that we have. And there's a clear path
24 forward to do that now scientifically and
25 economically. Thank you.

1 EXAMINER NEWMARK: All right. Great.

2 Thanks very much.

3 (Witness excused.)

4 EXAMINER NEWMARK: That's all the slips I
5 have. Anyone else wish to speak? All right. We'll
6 take a break for now until people, if they decide to
7 speak, we'll be here, so remember you can fill out a
8 slip and give it to us. So we'll wait and see also,
9 you know, see if more people show up too. All
10 right.

11 (Recess taken from 3:15 to 4:50 p.m.)

12 EXAMINER NEWMARK: Let's get on the
13 record. It's Kerry M. Blaney.

14 MR. BLANEY: Blaney, B-L-A-N-E-Y.
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1 KERRY M. BLANEY, PUBLIC WITNESS, DULY SWORN

2 DIRECT TESTIMONIAL STATEMENT

3 BY MR. BLANEY: Okay. I'm here today
4 regarding the proposed acquisition of the Wisconsin
5 Energies of the Wisconsin Public Service Corporation
6 headquartered in Green Bay. I'm registering
7 opposing to the acquisition, for several reasons.
8 It's not really in the best interests of the
9 Wisconsin Public Service ratepayers.

10 I'm from Green Bay, and I'm in service by
11 Wisconsin Public Service utility for gas and
12 electric. The Wisconsin Energies' rates are much
13 higher for gas and electric, and it would be a
14 disadvantage for the ratepayers in the Public
15 Service customer service area.

16 In addition, there's 600 jobs
17 headquartered here in Green Bay, six to 700 jobs in
18 the downtown office building. And most of those
19 people whose jobs would be eliminated. So you have
20 high paying middle class jobs being evaporated in
21 the Green Bay area, and it's going to affect
22 economic conditions of the Green Bay area. So it's
23 going to be a net job loss, you know, for the area;
24 and that has a negative impact for our economy in
25 the Green Bay area.

1 Also, the headquarters here for our
2 service area, they have very good customer service
3 for their customers. I've called them several times
4 on different issues over gas and electric. They
5 have superior customer service feedback to help
6 individuals that have any questions or problems.

7 I understand it's not the same type of
8 service that Wisconsin Energy provides to the area
9 of Milwaukee and other service areas. From comments
10 I heard from those people, the service is not very
11 good at all. So I think we have superb public
12 service helping the customers here, and I'm afraid
13 that will diminish.

14 Also, what happens is that most of the
15 board of directors now and the head of the Public
16 Service in Green Bay are not from the service area.
17 They're from different areas around the country, the
18 board of directors are. And I believe they don't
19 have the best interests for the customers and the
20 ratepayers of Wisconsin, of Public Service
21 customers. Many of them, they receive shares of
22 stock for being on the board of directors.

23 With this proposed acquisition, they're
24 going to benefit huge, significant rewards for
25 voting for the approval of this in the first place.

1 So it's an economic financial self-interest on the
2 board of directors to propose this sale. At the
3 expense of the rate -- of the customers of the
4 Wisconsin Public Service. So it's a financial
5 reward for them to propose or to go ahead with this
6 agreement.

7 And I just want to tell you I am a
8 stockholder of Wisconsin Public Service. They have
9 good dividend returns on their investment, I'm
10 pleased with it. I'm not here to make a windfall on
11 my stock. And with this proposed merger, people are
12 going to make a windfall.

13 I'm interested in the Green Bay area, good
14 customer service, and for the citizens of the area
15 and for people with the jobs in the area. I don't
16 want to see people lose their jobs and service
17 decrease. So I definitely don't think it's in the
18 best interest for this to go through. But I'm
19 really concerned, like I said, the board of
20 directors making a windfall promoting this to go
21 through and not looking at the interests of the
22 employees or the rate users -- or utility customers.
23 And that's all I have to say.

24 EXAMINER NEWMARK: Okay. Well, thank you
25 very much. I'll take that as well if you want.

1 THE WITNESS: This is my copy.

2 EXAMINER NEWMARK: Oh, you have this. I
3 didn't see that.

4 MR. BLANEY: Thank you for giving me the
5 opportunity to express my opinion on this. I
6 greatly appreciate it. Thank you.

7 EXAMINER NEWMARK: All right. We'll stay
8 adjourned now -- or we'll stay in recess until we
9 see if someone else shows up.

10 (Recess taken from 5:00 to 5:29 p.m.)

11 EXAMINER NEWMARK: The time now is 5:30.
12 There being no more members of the public available
13 to provide public comments, we will adjourn. Thanks
14 very much.

15 (The hearing concluded at 5:30 p.m.)
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1 STATE OF WISCONSIN)

2 MILWAUKEE COUNTY)

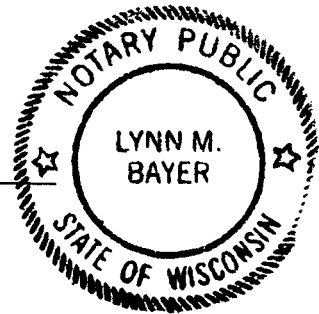
3
4 I, LYNN M. BAYER, RMR, Certificate of Merit
5 Reporter with the firm of Gramann Reporting Company, 740
6 North Plankinton, Suite 400, Milwaukee, Wisconsin, do
7 hereby certify that I reported the foregoing proceedings,
8 and that the same is true and correct in accordance with
9 my original machine shorthand notes.

10 DATED THIS 27th DAY OF February, 2015.

11
12 *Lynn M Bayer*
13 _____

14 Lynn Peppey Bayer

15 Certificate of Merit Reporter
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